

## **Athens City Commission on Disabilities**

### **Video Conference Monthly Meeting**

**June 17, 2020**

**5:30 p.m. – 6:30 p.m.**

### **Broadcast and Recorded on the Government Channel**

**Present:** Commissioners David McNelly, Noah Trembly, Dianne Bouvier, Carolyn Bailey Lewis, Rose Dikis, Berry Dilley, Samorra Dower, Sly Mata, Scott Dennis, Arian Smedley, jw Smith; Paige Fuentes (ASL Interpreter), Claire Gysegem (committee member), Scott Thompson (technical support).

**Not Present:** Robin Brigante, Cheryl Prusinski, Preston Silvey

**Called to Order at 5:35 p.m.** Meeting was held via Zoom set up by Scott Thompson and facilitated by Davey McNelly.

#### **Introductions and Check-in**

- People introduced themselves and talked about how impacted by current circumstances.

#### **Approval of Minutes**

- jw Smith made a motion to approve May 20, 2020, Minutes. Seconded by Samorra Dower and motion passed.

#### **Treasurer's Report**

- Carolyn Lewis reported the Commission has a balance of \$1,000 and \$1,600 in City funds for ASL services. jw moved to accept the Treasurer's report and Samorra seconded. Motion passed to accept the Treasurer's Report.

#### **New Business**

##### **Community Needs and possible ways to address**

- Davey asked if there are any community needs we should address.
- Continue to use social media to promote people wearing masks and inform people of assistance available
  - o Claire Gysegem announced that HAPCAP received money from the State for Emergency Housing Funds to cover rent and mortgage costs. If under pressure to pay rent and having need due to COVID-19, contact HAPCAP. Income limits listed. Emergency housing funds. <https://hapcap.org/housing/emergency-housing-assistance/>

- Carolyn and Samorra noted that the new Athens Community Center pool does not have an accessible restroom. No automatic door openers, could not use the facility. Single user restroom is too narrow. This will be taken up for review in the Accessibility Committee. Samorra and Carolyn will send information to Accessibility Committee (c/o Davey, chair) they noted. Discussion about whether City Community Center is accessible. No known issues, but can be reviewed as well. Braille signs and materials could help make the space more accessible.

### **Membership**

- Two Commission members, Preston Silvey and Robin Brigante, have not been participating. The Executive Committee has been in contact and they have not indicated an interest in continuing. Davey made a motion to send them each a letter thanking them for their service and letting them know that if their circumstances changed and they wanted to reconnect, they could do that. They could also be involved with committees. Carolyn seconded the Motion. Motion passed.

### **City Requirements for Zoom Meetings**

- Patty Witmer sent new requirements to the Executive Committee. Carolyn, Noah and Dianne have scheduled a phone call June 18, 2020 to seek clarification on the Zoom meeting requirements. Information will be provided to the City Commission after it has been clarified.

### **Solidarity with Black Lives Matter (50% of police killings are of people with disabilities ; <https://www.nbcnews.com/news/us-news/half-people-killed-police-suffer-mental-disability-report-n538371>)**

- Discussion - Davey said that we need to acknowledge intersectionality and commonality for those who have been historically marginalized and how they intersect for all of us. Would like the Commission to issue a statement that we support Black Lives Matter movement and we recognize how intersects with people who live with disabilities. Davey made a motion that the Executive Committee, Communication and Advocacy Committees would craft a statement. Discussion that these are complex issues, indicate unequal access to opportunity, and that context matters for relaying a message. Recommendation that message provides context around differently abled-ness, to send a message of solidarity and support.
- Davey made a motion that jw and Carolyn will forward bullet points to Sly, who will do a first draft of a BLM/Disability statement, to be sent to Communications and Advocacy Committees, then on to entire group for group consensus. jw seconded and the Motion passed.

## **Old Business**

### **City Commission Personal Profiles**

- Davey will work with Communications Committee to test the DRAFT and finalize form for City Commission personal profiles Carolyn is currently the point person for the Communications Committee.
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**Note:** Because of time restrictions, Davey made a decision to Table OSILC board updates. Hopefully there will be services in Southeast Ohio in three years.

## **Committee Reports**

### **Executive**

- Letter to the editor regarding wearing masks sent in and published in the Athens Messenger.
- Oversees that Committee reports and agendas out in a timely manner. Seeking more information on Sunshine Laws
- Noah is working with Paul Logue.

### **Accessibility and Mobility**

- Conducted Walk and Roll of uptown area near Court and Union during June meeting. Rob Delach was on site with his phone camera and we wrote down accessibility issues with entrances, sidewalks, crosswalks, pathways, etc. Next Walk and Roll scheduled for July 9<sup>th</sup>. Contact committee if you would like to participate.

### **Communications**

- Preparing monthly letters to the editor, with a focus on giving personal context around disability. Noah is working with Carolyn for this month's letter. Berry is writing something for July in honor of the 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the ADA. Claire doing letter to the editor. Arian is the point person. Also thinking about column ideas. Rose is the liaison for fb. Claire, Dianne and Carolyn have been added in as editors. Claire is adding ideas for commission site.

### **Advocacy**

- Sly and Noah organized the first Advocacy Committee meeting. Noah helped to get proper link. Apologies to jw Smith on not forwarding the link. Discussed duties, responsibilities and roles, which they will send out to committee and see where people want to be involved. The group had good energy. Thanks for leading this group and getting it started, Sly!

### **Education & Outreach**

- The Committee will meet in July.

### **Commission Meeting Extended**

- At 6:30 pm, Davey made a Motion to extend the meeting. jw seconded. Motion passed.

## **Announcements**

- Arian announced that the City Council is extending the use of sidewalk to take over some parking spots for uptown businesses to have outdoor seating during COVID-19. Arian sent a copy of the document to Davey, who forwarded it to the Accessibility Committee. They reviewed and provided feedback, some is being incorporated into the plan and the rest they will keep an eye to be sure no problem develops. Thank you to Arian for forwarding to Accessibility Committee. Arian thanks the Committee for responding so quickly. Davey asked the recommendations to be attached to the Minutes.
- jw asked how are we doing with our Deaf and Hard of Hearing folks on the Commission, to be sure they are included. Cheryl said she doesn't have good internet and will try to get to library. She has access to recorded version of meeting.

## **Commission Nomination Process**

- Executive Committee formalized the process for commission membership. We first invite people to be on committees, join full commission meetings, and see what a person can add to the commission. We invite them to complete an Application and give their resume. We check references. The Commission votes and takes recommendations to Mayor Patterson. The Mayor forwards to the City Council for final approval.
- Claire Gysegem was nominated and has gone through the initial process. Before Voting and asking Claire to leave the meeting, call for Announcements.
- Davey made a motion to have the Executive Committee forward Claire Gysegem's name and materials to the Mayor for her to become a City Commission Member. Rose seconded, jw as well. Motion carried. Motion carried.

## **Adjourned**

- Meeting adjourned by Davey at 6:48 pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Dianne Bouvier  
Secretary, Athens City Commission on Disabilities  
June 18, 2020

